

EPD Watershed Protection Branch Planned Improvements to Public Notification Procedures

The Watershed Protection Branch (Branch) is currently preparing draft amendments to specific rules under Chapter 391-3-6, Rules for Water Quality Control, to comply with the federal *NPDES: Applications and Program Updates* rule, 84 FR 3324 (eff. 6/12/19). The draft rule amendments incorporate electronic public notice procedures. In addition, the Branch has received inquiries in the past as to whether any email notification system is available to alert the public when notifications are posted to our Branch announcements website (<https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch-public-announcements>), whether those notifications are NPDES-related or on other permitting or non-permitting topics.

To facilitate electronic public notice in conjunction with the upcoming rule amendments and to better serve the public, the Branch plans to create three Watershed Protection Branch email subscription topics to enable the public to subscribe for electronic notifications.

The three Watershed Protection Branch email subscription topics would include:

1. Watershed Protection Branch – Permit-related Notices
 - This list will provide email notification to subscribers regarding permit-related public notices posted to EPD's website on: NPDES wastewater, NPDES stormwater, land application systems, water withdrawals, pretreatment, State Environmental Review Process reviews of GEFA-funded projects, and permit-related public meetings or hearings.
2. Watershed Protection Branch – State Water Buffer Variance Notices
 - This list will provide email notification to subscribers regarding public notices posted to EPD's website on requests for state water buffer variances and coastal marshland buffer variances under the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act.
3. Watershed Protection Branch – **Water Quality**, TMDLs and Grants
 - This list will provide email notification to subscribers regarding notifications posted to EPD's website on water quality standards (including Triennial Review), **assessment of state waters (requests for data and Georgia's 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Reports)**, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), public meetings or hearings related to those topics, and grant opportunities.

The Branch will hold a public meeting about the draft rule amendments noted above and these planned improvements on **Wednesday, January 15, 2020 beginning at 10:00 am** at the EPD Tradeport Training Room located at 4244 International Parkway, Suite 116, Atlanta, GA 30354. EPD is also accepting comments through close of business on January 17, 2020. Comments may be emailed to EPDComments@dnr.ga.gov (please use "Watershed Protection Branch Rule Updates and Public Notification Procedures" in the subject line) or sent via regular mail to: EPD Watershed Protection Branch, 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., Suite 1152, East Tower, Atlanta, Georgia, 30334.